



March 21, 2003

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **STEENS MOUNTAIN ADVISORY COUNCIL TO MEET IN BURNS**

The Steens Mountain Advisory Council (SMAC) will be meeting at the Burns District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, April 9-11, 2003, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The public is welcome to attend all portions of the meeting, and may contribute during public comment sessions scheduled at 11:00 a.m. each day. Unless otherwise approved by the SMAC Chair, the public comment periods will last no longer than 30 minutes, and each speaker will address the SMAC for a maximum of 5 minutes.

On Wednesday morning, the SMAC will begin with chairman and designated federal official updates, the strategy to review and work through the Preliminary Draft Andrews/Steens Resource Management Plan (RMP), and will readdress a tabled motion from the March meeting regarding road closures. Wednesday's meeting will conclude with discussions on proposed management actions within the RMP affecting transportation and wildlife resources.

The SMAC will devote Thursday and Friday entirely to the review of the Preliminary Draft RMP. The remaining two SMAC priority issues of recreation and wilderness will be discussed as well as any other matters that may reasonably come before the SMAC. The meeting will adjourn Friday after planning the May 8 and 9, 2003 meeting agenda.

The Draft Andrews Management Unit/Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) will be available for public comment late summer/early fall 2003. After the release of the Draft RMP/EIS, the public will be provided a 90-day comment period. The BLM encourages all members of the public to submit comments during that period.

If you have information you would like to have distributed to SMAC members, please send it to Rhonda Karges at the Burns District Office, 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon 97738, no later than 10 days prior to the start of the meeting.

Current SMAC members and their representative category of constituents are listed below:

- Richard Benner - No Financial Interest
- Stacy Davies - Grazing Permittee
- Alice Elshoff - Environmental Representative-Local
- Michael Golden - Dispersed Recreation
- E. Ron Harding - Wild Horse Management
- Tom Harris, Chair - Mechanized or Consumptive Recreation
- Wanda Johnson - Burns Paiute Tribe
- Jason Miner - Fish and Recreational Fishing
- Jerry Sutherland, Vice Chair - Environmental Representative-State
- Hoyt Wilson - Grazing Permittee
- Cynthia Witzel - Recreation Permit Holder
- Harland Yriarte - Private Landowner
- Steve Purchase - State Government Liaison (nonvoting member)

The Designated Federal Official is Karla Bird, Andrews Resource Area Field Manager.

**For further information on the SMAC or the upcoming meeting, contact Rhonda Karges at the Burns District Office at 28910 Highway 20 West, Hines, Oregon, or call (541) 573-4400, weekdays, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. You may also check the Steens Web site at <http://www.or.blm.gov/Steens> for more information.**